1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 5

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a. DESERTED VILLAGE OF GOMEN

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b. AIRING THE BEDS

[Facing p.23]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi



others (see Pl. 4). Here the women work, cook, and gossip; the men may join them if they wish, except the boys wearing the *upi* (leaf hut connected with puberty ceremonies), to whom all that portion of the village is rigorously taboo.

The interior is alike in all. There are no dividing partitions. The floor is the bare earth, trodden hard. The only furniture is a row of broad planks propped up on small logs, along one side of the hut, which serve as beds. Short lengths of bamboo are used as pillows. Between each plank is just space enough for a small fire. There is probably a place for roasting taro with the aid of hot stones, the native oven, at the farther end of the hut near the women's entrance. Cooking pots, the cleaned-out coco-nut shells used to store water, packs for carrying taro, and a few personal possessions, lie on the ground; sometimes a plank is laid across two poles to form a shelf on which such objects can be kept out of the way. Bundles containing more valuable property hang from the rafters, tied up in banana fibre or old loin-cloths. Every returned plantation hand is the proud possessor of a wooden box with lock and key, part of the kit which must be provided by the employer for each of his 'boys' when they 'sign on', which he displays in a prominent position. All sorts of treasures such as medicine bundles, knives, &c., are stowed away between the thatch and the supporting rafters. Nets and banana-fibre straps for carrying burdens hang over the cross-poles that form part of the framework of the hut, and there is usually a basket containing some pieces of cold taro in case any one feels hungry at a time when it is not convenient to cook.

As a rule, the household consists of father, mother, and children. In the case of polygynous marriages, each wife will usually have her own hut, particularly if she has children, and the husband distributes his company as he pleases, spending a certain amount of time with the woman who ranks as his chief wife, but most of it with the one who for the time being stands highest in favour. A wife who is old or incapacitated, or one whose children have all started out for themselves, will often share a hut with one of the other wives, not always amicably. In some of the Buka villages large huts are now built, housing all the wives of one man; the interior of these is partitioned off into rooms for each. An aged parent of either sex may also form part of the household, the taboo between mother-in-law and son-in-law being relaxed when the former is old.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 52

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CARVING *WATSINAN*

[facing p. 378]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi



*Comments by the dreamer.* This is a good dream. The *urar* were those we called yesterday at the taro garden. When they brought me to the tree that looked like a boat they said to me: 'You sit down, you hold the rudder firmly with your foot.' When I woke up I thought of my knife, and I thought I had thrown it away into the bush the day before yesterday when I finished making *menak*. So I got up and went to look for it in the bush; didn't you hear me shut the door of my house? I looked for it in the bush, but I could not find it; then I came back and found it stuck in the rafters of the house.

*Comments by the recorder.* Sobak is my next-door neighbour, his house is barely 20 feet from my own. I had heard him go out in the night, and had wondered what he was doing. The ceremony referred to is the one described in Chapter IX in which he had played a part. Small articles such as knives, &c., are usually stuck in the rafters of the house for safe-keeping.

No. 59. Gomar (adult female).

I dreamed about a child, about as big as Waror (i.e. about 7 or 8 years old.) It (Waror is a girl, but from the pronoun used the sex of the dream-child is left undetermined) took me up and threw me up into the air, and I fell down on to the ground. Then the child took me up again and threw me again on top, and I cried out: '*Wa, wa, wa, wa.*' I fell down, and I took some dirt and made the child's face swell up; I covered its face with dirt. Then it ran after me, and took a stone and beat me, and I ran away and hid, and it ran after me, and I stood still and took a rope and tied the child up, and tried to shut it up but I could not, and it ran after me, and I trembled. Then it took another stone, and beat me again, and I called out: '*Ia, ia, Binas!*' Then Binas said: 'What are you fighting? You leave her alone, let her stay quiet; if you do it again I shall beat you.' So I ran away, and fell down, and hid, and I took some rope and tied up the child. This is a very good dream. I called out aloud in my sleep, and Pinari woke me up.

*Comment by recorder.* Gomar is Pinari's wife; Binas is another of his wives. The dreamer could give no reason why she considered this a good dream, but she was very definite about it.

Perhaps there should be included here a dream which comes the nearest of any in my collection to what we should call a nightmare. It took place during an illness, and its physical cause may well have been fever. It was related to me after the dreamer's recovery.

No. 42. Wasang (adult male).

When I was ill I saw something that had an axe; it had no hands, it was very fat, it had a mouth. It was very large, but when I came close up to it, it was small.

## Dwellings

House construction differs in the various parts of the region in question. The Sir Charles Hardy Islands, the Carteret Islands, Buka, and north Bougainville do not differ essentially from one another. Here the huts, for the most part, are situated one beside the other, five to ten in number, the gable ends with the entrance facing the street and the sides so close together that there is scarcely room to pass between them. These buildings vary in length from 6 to 12 meters and in width from 3 to 5 meters with a height of from 3 to 4 meters. The side walls are about half a meter high and consist of strips of the outer hardwood of a palm species, which are laid vertically next to one another and tied firmly to horizontal strips of the same material. Strong central pillars carry the roof, and thin strips of palm wood are fastened perpendicular to the ridgepole in such a way that they extend far beyond the side walls and, when the framework is covered with leaves, almost conceal these sidewalls. These rafters are connected and firmly attached to each other by roof laths, which run parallel to the ridge pole; as a rule the whole roof frame is slightly rounded. As roof covering either woven coconut leaves are used or far more frequently the leaves of another palm--if I am not mistaken, Phytelephas; these leaves are placed individually on a rod about 1 1/2 meters long, and a leaf rib penetrates the individual leaves in such a way that they cover each other and cannot slide off the rod. These individual roof sections are now fastened next to each other and tightly over one another on the roof framework and make a cool impenetrable roof. The gable ends are faced with boards that are split from a tree trunk with an ax and carefully smoothed; and here, about one-half meter above the floor is the entrance, a small rectangular hole, just large enough for a man to slip through comfortably. On the same level with this entrance there is an approximately 1 meter wide platform which takes up the whole width of the gable end and is shaded by the projecting roof; this place is the favorite haunt of the women and children, who, at the slightest suspicious noise, slip from here into the hut and close the little door behind them. Inside, the huts are frequently divided by walls into individual compartments that serve for living, sleeping and cooking. The beds are usually board and bamboo frames that are slightly raised above the floor; sometimes

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a simple coconut leaf mat on the hard packed floor takes the place of these. Under and next to each bed a glowing and smoking coal fire is kept burning during the night--partially to warm the body and partially as protection against gnats. Since the previously mentioned entrance to the hut is the only opening, obviously only a little light enters. Moreover, the hut is completely darkened by the constant smoke, and it is very difficult to distinguish one thing from another inside this dwelling.

In this region the chieftains have no special houses, and there are likewise no special assembly houses like the ones we encounter farther to the south. If now and then a chieftain has a larger hut, then the front compartment is generally open, and the big wooden signal drums stand here. This place is also used as the council room of the old men or as the reception room for guests, and thus it substitutes for the taboo houses that will be mentioned later.

In southern Bougainville as well as on the island of Fauro, the dwellings are frequently built on piles about three to four meters high; a ladder leads up to the door opening. Here the roofs are not so carefully constructed as in the north. The two flat sides are not rounded, and meet at a very obtuse angle. In addition to these pile dwellings there are also huts built on level ground. In the Shortland Islands the latter are more prevalent.

[18] Characteristic for this part of the islands, however, are the taboo houses and the large houses of the chieftains. Coming from the north, we encounter the first so-called "taboo house" in the village of Toboroi on the east coast of Bougainville. The word "taboo house" is, strictly speaking, a false designation; it would be more correct to say "men's assembly house" since only women and children are forbidden to enter the building. These assembly houses are rather spacious buildings; the floor plan is a rectangle of 15 to 20 meters in length and 6 to 10 meters in width. The side walls are 2 to 2 1/2 meters high; the gable ends are open and the corner posts are sometimes carved--sometimes in the form of the human figure, sometimes in the form of a shark, but just as frequently the carving is a decoration consisting of zigzag lines, rectangles and other geometrical figures. On the side walls of the house tree trunks or bamboo canes are attached to one another to make a long bench; here the men and the youths squat or lie. The favorite place--I am almost